

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1. (Previously Amended) A gaming machine comprising:

a housing;

C1 a master gaming controller mounted within the housing designed or configured i) to control one or more games played on the gaming machine, ii) to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions comprising:

a) evaluating player tracking events,

b) directly controlling operating features of a plurality of physical devices in response to the player tracking events,

c) executing player tracking software that allows the plurality of physical devices to perform the functions of a player tracking unit;

wherein the player tracking services are provided without a separate player tracking hardware unit including 1) player tracking devices and 2) a processor ,separate from the master gaming controller and connected to the player tracking devices, for executing player tracking software to operate the player tracking devices as the player tracking hardware unit;

a main display coupled to the housing used to display the one or more games controlled by the master gaming controller;

one or more input devices coupled to the housing for accepting indicia of credit wherein the indicia of credit are for making wagers on the games played on the gaming machine;

one or more output devices coupled to the housing for dispensing the indicia of credit;

one or more input devices coupled to the housing for inputting the player tracking information into the gaming machine wherein the input devices are among the plurality of physical devices directly controlled by the master gaming controller;

a communication interface coupled to the housing for communicating at least the player tracking information between the gaming machine and the remote gaming devices.

2. (Previously Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, further comprising:

a memory storing player tracking software that allows the master gaming controller to perform the player tracking functions.

3. (Previously Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the input device for inputting the player tracking information is selected from the group consisting of a card

reader, a key pad, a touch screen, a microphone, a wire-less communication interface, or a bar code reader.

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4. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 1, further comprising at least one display device for displaying the player tracking information.

5. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 4, wherein the display device is a monitor, a LCD, a fluorescent display, or a sound projection device.

6. (Previously Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the game is a mechanical slot game, a video slot game, a keno game or a video poker game.

7. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the communication interface is connected to a network.

8. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 7, wherein the network is a casino area network, wide area progressive network, bonus game network or a cashless system network.

9. (Previously Amended) The gaming machine of claim 2, wherein the memory stores software for one or more device drivers that allow the master gaming controller to operate at least some of the input devices.

10. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 9, wherein the device driver uses a communication protocol including Netplex, USB, Ethernet, Firewire, direct memory map, PCI, serial and parallel.

11. (Amended) The gaming machine of claim 2, wherein the memory stores software for one or more device interfaces that allow the master gaming controller to detect the player tracking events from the physical devices directly controlled by the master gaming controller.

12. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 11, wherein the device interface is a card reader, a monitor, a display, or key pad.

13. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the communication interface is connected to at least two different networks using the same communication connection.

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14. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 13, wherein the communication connection is Ethernet.

15. (Previously Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein one of the remote gaming devices is a player tracking server.

16. (Previously Amended) The gaming machine of claim 2, wherein the master gaming controller includes a memory storing software for receiving the player tracking events from the remote gaming devices.

17. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the player tracking information is at least one of a player name, a time, a date, an amount wagered, a location, and a type of game.

18. (Previously Amended) The gaming machine of claim 2, wherein the memory stores software that allows the master gaming controller to receive at least player tracking information from the remote gaming devices and to send at least player tracking information to the remote gaming devices using one or more communication protocols.

19. (Previously Amended) The game machine of claim 18, wherein the communication protocol is selected from the group consisting of a manufacturer player tracking communication protocol and TCP/IP communication protocol.

20. (Previously Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the gaming machine is capable of receiving player tracking information from one or more of a magnetic-stripped card, a smart card, a personal digital assistant, a finger print reader, a wire-less device, a sound device and a bar-coded ticket.

21. (Previously Amended) The gaming machine of claim 2, wherein the master gaming controller includes a memory storing software that allows the master gaming controller to detect power- failures.

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22. (Previously Amended) The gaming machine of claim 1, further comprising:
a non-volatile memory for storing player tracking events.

23. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the communication interface includes a wire-less communication interface.

24. (Currently Amended) A method for providing player tracking services on a gaming machine with i) a housing, ii) a master gaming controller mounted within the housing that controls a plurality of physical devices used to present games and to provide player tracking services on the gaming machine, iii) a main display coupled to the housing used to display the games, iv) one or more input devices coupled to the housing for accepting indicia of credit for wagering on the games, v) one or more output devices for dispensing the indicia of credit; vi) one or more input devices coupled to the housing for inputting the player tracking information into the gaming machine; and vii) a communication interface coupled to the housing for communicating with remote gaming devices, the method comprising:

loading player tracking software into a memory utilized by the master gaming controller on the gaming machine wherein the player tracking software is for allowing the master gaming controller to directly control operating features of the plurality of physical devices used to provide player tracking services on the gaming machine;

receiving a player tracking event from at least one of the physical devices and the remote gaming devices;

evaluating the player tracking event using the player tracking software; and

in response to the player tracking event, controlling operation features of the physical devices with the master gaming controller to provide the player tracking services wherein the player tracking services are provided without a separate player tracking hardware unit including 1) player tracking devices and 2) a processor ,separate from the master gaming controller and connected to the player tracking devices, for executing player tracking software to operate the player tracking devices as the player tracking hardware unit;

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25. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the player tracking software includes player tracking device interfaces, player tracking device drivers, player tracking event evaluators, and player tracking communication protocol translators.

26. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the player tracking device driver is for a card reader, a monitor, a key pad, or a display.

27. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the player tracking device drivers utilize a communication protocol selected from the group including Netplex, USE, Ethernet, Firewire, PCI, direct memory map, Serial and Parallel.

28. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein the player tracking device interfaces are selected from the group consisting of card readers, key pads and displays.

29. (Original) The method of claim 25, wherein when a first player tracking device driver is replaced with a second player tracking device driver different from said first player tracking device driver, the player tracking device interface corresponding to said first player tracking device driver and said second player tracking device driver is not changed.

30. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 24, further comprising translating the player tracking information to a communication protocol used by one of the remote gaming devices.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30, wherein the communication protocol is selected from the group consisting of a manufacturer player tracking protocol and TCP/IP.

32. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 24, further comprising:
sending player tracking information one of the remote gaming devices using the communication interface wherein the one gaming device is a player tracking server.

33. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 32, wherein the player tracking information is at least one of a player name, a time, a date, an amount wagered, a location, and a type of game.

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34. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 24, further comprising displaying player tracking information to a display device controlled by the master gaming controller.

35. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein the display device is a monitor, a fluorescent screen, an LCD or a sound projection device.

36. (Original) The method of claim 24, further comprising storing a player tracking event to a non-volatile memory.

37. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 24, further comprising tracking game usage by individual players using the gaming machine.

38. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 37, further comprising:
receiving player tracking information from the physical devices wherein the physical devices are selected from the group consisting of is a card reader, a touch screen, a key pad, panel buttons, a display and a bar-code reader.

39. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the communication interface is connected to a network.

40. (Original) The method of claim 39, wherein the network is a casino area network, wide area progressive network, bonus game network, or a cashless system network.

41. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the gaming machine is a slot machine, a video slot machine, a keno game, or a video poker game

42. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the player tracking event is an encapsulated information packet.

43. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the player tracking event is sent to two or more destinations.

44. (Currently Amended) At least one computer readable medium containing a program for providing player tracking services on a gaming machine with i) a housing, ii) a

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master gaming controller mounted within the housing that controls a plurality of physical devices used to present games and to provide player tracking services on the gaming machine, iii) a main display coupled to the housing used to display the games, iv) one or more input devices coupled to the housing for accepting indicia of credit for wagering on the games, v) one or more output devices for dispensing the indicia of credit; vi) one or more input devices coupled to the housing for inputting the player tracking information into the gaming machine; and vii) a communication interface coupled to the housing for communicating with remote gaming devices, the said at least one computer medium comprising:

computer readable code for loading player tracking software into a memory utilized by the master gaming controller on the gaming machine wherein the player tracking software is for allowing the master gaming controller to individually control the plurality of physical devices used to provide player tracking services on the gaming machine;

computer readable code for receiving a player tracking related event from at least one of the physical devices and the remote gaming devices;

computer readable code for evaluating the player tracking event using the player tracking software; and

computer readable code for in response to the player tracking event, controlling operation features of the physical devices with the master gaming controller to provide the player tracking services wherein the player tracking services are provided without a separate player tracking hardware unit including 1) player tracking devices and 2) a processor, separate from the master gaming controller and connected to the player tracking devices, for executing player tracking software to operate the player tracking devices as the player tracking hardware unit.

45. Previously Cancelled.

46. Previously Cancelled.

47. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services using two or more of the following physical devices coupled to the housing and directly controlled by the master gaming controller: a) the main display, b) a secondary display different from the main display, c) a card reader, d) a key pad, e) a touch screen, f) a microphone, g) a wire-less communication interface, h) a bar code reader, i) input buttons on the gaming machine and j) combinations thereof.

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48. (Original) The method of claim 24, wherein the gaming machine is capable of providing the player tracking services using two or more of the following physical devices coupled to the housing and directly controlled by the master gaming controller: a) the main display, b) a secondary display different from the main display, c) a card reader, d) a key pad, e) a touch screen, f) a microphone, g) a wire-less communication interface, h) a bar code reader, i) input buttons on the gaming machine and j) combinations thereof.

49. (Previously Added) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the master gaming controller designed or configured to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions further comprising:
receiving player tracking information from the physical devices.

50. (Previously Added) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the master gaming controller designed or configured to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions further comprising:
displaying player tracking information to the physical devices.

51. (Previously Added) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the master gaming controller designed or configured to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions further comprising:
tracking game usage by individual players using the gaming machine.

52. (Previously Added) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the master gaming controller designed or configured to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions further comprising:
tracking game usage by individual players using the gaming machine.

53. (Previously Added) The gaming machine of claim 1, wherein the master gaming controller designed or configured to provide player tracking services by performing player tracking functions further comprising:
receiving player tracking information from remote gaming devices.
